

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.-30. (canceled).

31. (currently amended) An implantable device-implemented method of early detection and monitoring of congestive heart failure in a patient, which comprises the steps of: measuring local impedance of a portion of the patient's body generally occupied by the lungs solely through surface mounted electrodes on the device with the device implanted subcutaneously in the patient's body ~~at the locality where the impedance measurements are to be performed~~, determining when the local impedance measurements are indicative of a condition of congestive heart failure based on factors other than the existence of edema, detecting the patient's heart rate/activity pattern through said electrodes while concurrently monitoring said local impedance measurements to evaluate cardiopulmonary status of the patient, and evaluating ~~the trend~~ a trend of the heart rate/activity pattern and said concurrent local impedance measurements against one another over a selected period of time, as an additional indicia of congestive heart failure.

32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended) A method for ~~identifying~~ evaluating congestive heart failure in a patient having a heart and lungs with a subcutaneous monitoring device having a plurality of surface-mounted electrodes implanted in a vicinity of said lungs, comprising the steps of:

measuring an impedance value of said lungs and said vicinity of said lungs solely through at least some of said plurality of surface-mounted electrodes on the subcutaneous monitoring device;

detecting a characteristic of said heart with at least some of said plurality of surface-mounted electrodes;

determining a trend based on said impedance value and said characteristic, said trend being indicative of a condition of congestive heart failure; and

~~identifying~~ evaluating congestive heart failure as a function of said impedance value and said trend.

34. (previously presented) A method as in claim 33 wherein said characteristic is at least one of a heart rate and an activity pattern.
35. (currently amended) A method as in claim 33 wherein said ~~identifying~~ evaluating step is not a function of an existence of edema.
36. (previously presented) A method as in claim 33 wherein said detecting step occurs concurrently with the measuring step.